



**CUMBERLAND
CITY COUNCIL**

**Transport in the Cumberland Community
Research Report
June 2020**

Report prepared by the Social Research and Planning Team, Community and Place,
Cumberland City Council 2020

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Cumberland City Council acknowledges the Darug Nation and People as the traditional custodians of the land on which the Cumberland Local Government Area is situated and pays respect to Aboriginal Elders past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the First Peoples of Australia.

Cumberland City Council also acknowledges other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples living and working in the Cumberland Local Government Area.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF PARTICIPANTS

Cumberland City Council would like to acknowledge and thank everyone who participated in this research. This report would not have been possible without your time and willingness to share your stories and experiences.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents findings from research into key transport and mobility challenges for the Cumberland community. This research was conducted between August 2019 and April 2020 and is grounded in empirical data sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and Transport for NSW, amongst other sources, and extensive community engagement.

Quality transport options are fundamental to accessing many essential services, education, employment and social and recreational activities. Although three train lines run through the Cumberland LGA, in addition to the T80 high frequency bus route, many Cumberland residents still have difficulties getting around. Major barriers raised by the community relate to reliability, frequency and coverage of services. A lack of options often adds complexities to journey planning, especially when there are unexpected delays or cancellations. Even where there are options available, some community members are not aware of them, do not know how to access them or are apprehensive. Furthermore, certain cohorts and geographic areas have greater challenges accessing transport options.

Proposed future transport infrastructure projects may address some challenges, however these are costly long-term projects. This research report presents a number of grassroots opportunities that can be implemented in a more cost-efficient manner and at shorter timeframes. These opportunities can broadly be categorised as either local initiatives or advocacy (noting some of these have been identified and are more suitable for community rather than Council to undertake):

Local initiatives

- Travel training program
- Licence suspension and cancellation assistance
- Learner driver mentoring program
- Granny trolley promotions and giveaways
- Bicycle infrastructure project investigations
- Investigation of specific transport improvements for people with disabilities
- Bus stop and train station infrastructure and information
- Local community language speaker badges for transport personnel
- Cultural competency and disability awareness training for transport personnel
- Local transport guides
- Facilitating community input and advocacy during bus region contract renewals
- Service improvements and bus route proposals
- Local car sharing schemes

Advocacy

- Better transport data
- Reconsider metrics for access to public transport
- Better communications of transport upgrades and service changes
- Changes to Opal Cards
- Transport in the school curriculum
- NDIS and Commonwealth Home Support Program advocacy

CONTENTS

Executive summary	i
Background	1
Introduction	1
Key transport terms	1
Policy context	2
Role of local government	6
Research design	6
Research aim and scope	6
Methodology	6
Research limitations	8
Research participants	8
A snapshot of transport in Cumberland	11
Community profile	11
The existing transport network	15
The planned transport network	16
Research findings	18
General findings	18
Cohort-specific findings	22
Opportunities	25
Local initiatives	25
Advocacy	30
Appendix 1. List of participating organisations and groups	32
Appendix 2. Routes proposed by respondents	33
Appendix 3. Data Tables	34
Appendix 4. References	36

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Cumberland bus contract regions and their operators.....	4
Figure 2: Suburb of residence of survey participants.....	9
Figure 3: Age of survey participants	9
Figure 4: Language spoken by survey participants	10
Figure 5: Modes of transport frequently used by survey participants	10
Figure 6: Other demographic characteristics of online survey participants	10
Figure 7: Percentage of Cumberland residents by their place of work	12
Figure 8: Percentage of Cumberland workers by their place of residence	12
Figure 9: Areas within Cumberland with higher proportions of certain cohorts.....	14
Figure 10: Key transport connections in the Cumberland LGA.....	16
Figure 11: Future transport infrastructure changes in Cumberland	17
Figure 12: Current and preferred configurations for stations west of Bankstown on the T3 railway line	18
Figure 13: Map showing areas in Cumberland LGA within 400m of a bus or train stop with services running at least every 30minutes between 7am and 9pm every day.....	20
Figure 14: Vehicles available for hire on Car Next Door (peer-to-peer scheme)	29
Figure 15: Vehicles available for hire on GoGet (traditional roundtrip scheme)	29

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Relevant articles in international treaties, and what the articles relate to.	2
Table 2: Intercept survey schedule	7
Table 3: Specific characteristics of Cumberland residents	11
Table 4: Specific characteristics of Cumberland households	11
Table 5: Modes of travel to work for employed persons aged 15 and over	13
Table 6: Trips by travel mode on an average weekday	13
Table 7: Trips by travel purpose on an average weekday	13

BACKGROUND

Introduction

Transport and mobility is critical to the majority of our day-to-day activities. Access to employment, education, essential services including medical facilities and social and recreational activities are largely dependent on whether an individual can actually arrive at their target destination in a convenient, cost-efficient and timely manner. Yet for some members of the Cumberland community, getting around can present a difficult challenge, creating a barrier between them and their chosen destinations.

This report presents the findings of research into key transport and mobility issues in the Cumberland community. This research is based off significant community consultation and quantitative analysis of various data sources. It includes several community development-based opportunities that can be considered by Council and the broader sector to improve transport and mobility in the Cumberland Local Government Area (LGA).

Key transport terms

Transport disadvantage

Transport disadvantage refers to the limited access to services, employment, education and social and recreational activities due to lack of transport options. This may be due to lack of infrastructure and transport services, age, disability and/or financial situation. An individual's gender, race and culture, amongst other characteristics, may also influence their ability to move around independently, due to factors including safety concerns, cultural norms and English proficiency.

Active transport

Active transport refers to modes of transport that only rely on physical activity. The most common active transport modes are walking and cycling, but also includes other methods such as using a wheelchair, skateboarding and roller skating.

30 minute city

The 30 minute city is one where all residents live within a 30 minute trip of the jobs and services they need. The NSW Government is aiming for a 30 minute Greater Sydney, outlined in *A Metropolis of Three Cities*, where all communities are connected to a metropolitan centre and their respective strategic centres by active and public transport. For Cumberland, the closest metropolitan centre is Greater Parramatta and the nearby designated strategic centres are Sydney Olympic Park and Blacktown.

Community transport

Community transport refers to transport services designed to bridge the gap between conventional public transport and private transport. These subsidised services are usually run by not-for-profit organisations, funded through the state and federal governments and primarily targeted at seniors, people with disabilities and others who experience transport disadvantage.

Forced car ownership

Due to lack of alternatives, some households may require private vehicles to access services, education and/or employment, however car ownership also carries large financial burden, including the cost of maintenance, insurance, registration and petrol. Households that spend a high proportion of their income on private vehicles are described as

experiencing forced car ownership. Typically, this impacts low income households living in transport poor areas and can be a significant contributor to financial stress.¹

Hub and spoke model

The hub and spoke model is used to describe transport systems centred around a major transport hub, with feeder services providing access to and from this hub. Parramatta and Lidcombe serve as the primary transport hubs

Last mile

The last mile refers to the connection between a transport hub and the final destination, for example between a bus interchange or train station and home or a workplace. More specifically, this term typically describes the difficulties community members face when travelling between these places. The journey between an origin and a transport hub can also be referred to as the last mile, or alternatively, the first mile. Last mile problems are often associated with poor walking and cycling environments and lack of transport options.

Walkability

Walkability is a measure of how friendly an environment is to pedestrians. Factors that contribute to walkability include quality of footpaths, pedestrian crossings, safety, accessibility and many others. Walkable environments reduce the impact of last mile problems and increase accessibility for all, especially people using mobility aids or prams.

Policy context

International

Freedom of movement is defined as a human right in Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As transport and mobility enables individuals to participate in civic society, through access to essential services, education, employment, recreational activities and other facilities, access to safe and affordable transport options also meet various other international treaties to which Australia is a party. Some relevant articles and their associated treaties are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Relevant articles in international treaties, and what the articles relate to.

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	
Article 6	Employment
Article 12	Health
Article 13	Education
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	
Article 12	Freedom of movement
Article 25	Participation in political and public life
Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities	
Article 9	Accessibility
Article 18	Freedom of movement
Article 19	Living independently and being included in the community
Article 20	Personal mobility
Article 24	Education
Article 25	Health
Article 27	Employment
Article 29	Participation in political and public life
Article 30	Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	

¹ Currie *et al.* 2009

Article 5	Political and public life; freedom of movement; employment; education; health; cultural activities; access to any place or services intended for use by the general public
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	
Article 7	Participation in political and public life
Article 10	Education
Article 11	Employment
Article 12	Health
Article 13	Participation in economic, social and cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport
Convention on the Rights of the Child	
Article 3	Ensuring protection and care
Article 23	Education, employment, health and recreation for children with disabilities
Article 24	Health
Article 28	Education
Article 31	Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport

National

Commonwealth Home Support Program

The Commonwealth Home Support Program provides support for older people to live independently in their homes and communities. Respite support for carers is also available as part of this program. There are a number of different services that seniors can access through this program. Of particular relevance to this research are the transport services, whether or not associated with social support programs.

National Disability Insurance Scheme

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provides support for people under 65 living with disabilities and their carers. Amongst other supports, the NDIS can fund transport to enable participation in community, social, economic and daily life activities, mobility equipment and vehicle modifications.

State

Future Transport 2056

Future Transport 2056 is the NSW Government's 40 year strategy for transport investment across the state. Its vision for Greater Sydney is a place where people can access the jobs, education and services they need within 30 minutes by public or active transport. It is supported by a number of plans, including a Disability Inclusion Action Plan, an Older Persons Transport and Mobility Plan and a Social Access Plan (to be released).

A Metropolis of Three Cities and Central City District Plan

A Metropolis of Three Cities, the NSW Government's 40 year vision for Greater Sydney, highlights the importance of transport and mobility. A number of strategies in the plan identify transport, mobility and accessibility as critical for employment, education and recreation opportunities.

The Central City District Plan implements the strategies from the Metropolis of Three Cities at the district level (that is, across Cumberland, Blacktown, The Hills and Parramatta local government areas). The plan contains high level actions, including actions guiding the delivery of transport infrastructure for a 30 minute city. The plan identifies councils, other planning authorities and State agencies as the parties responsible for implementing these actions.

Sydney Metropolitan Bus Service Contracts

Transport for NSW divides the state into regions and issues contracts to private bus operators to deliver bus services in these regions. These contracts typically run for seven years. Cumberland's bus network is in parts of regions 3, 4, 6 and 13, delivered by ComfortDelgro Australia, Transit Systems and Transdev NSW. The contract regions are shown in Figure 1: Cumberland bus contract regions and their operators.

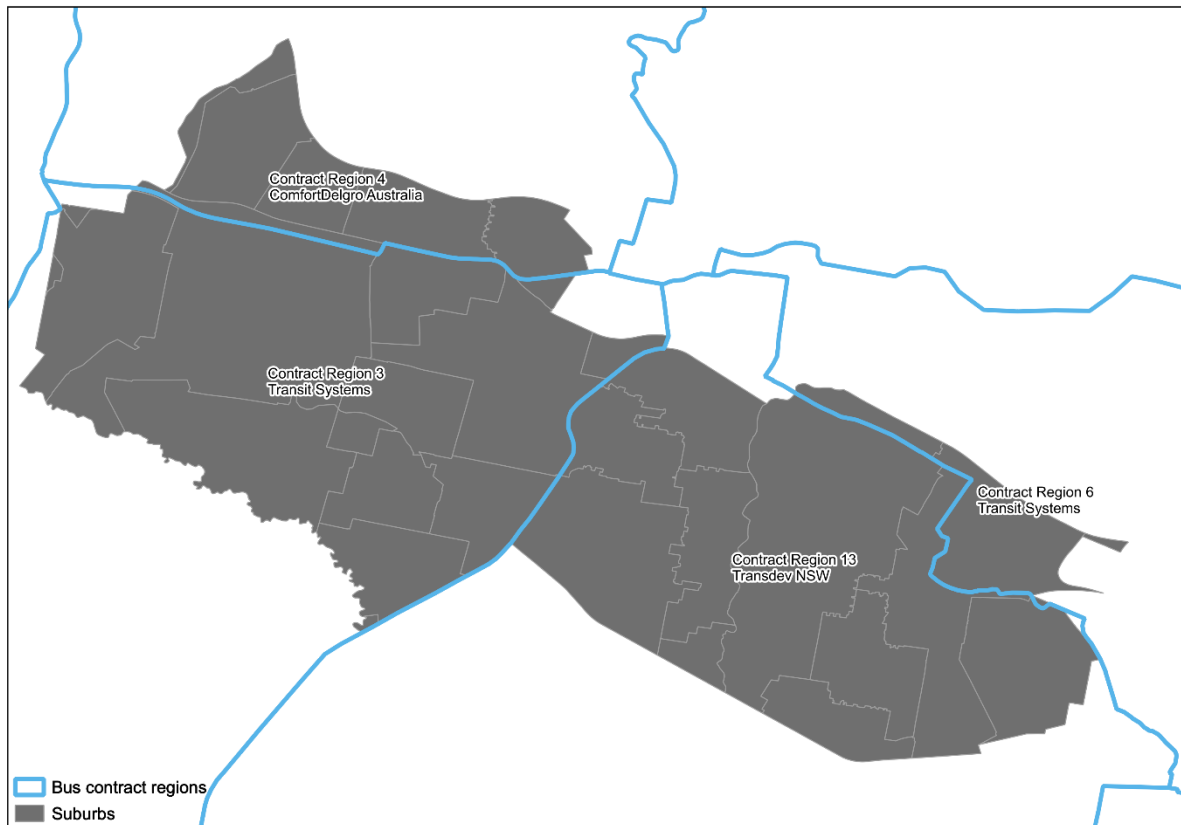


Figure 1: Cumberland bus contract regions and their operators

Integrated Public Transport Service Planning Guidelines

The Integrated Public Transport Service Planning Guidelines is Transport for NSW's framework for planning and reviewing public transport services. It includes parameters for service coverage, frequency and routing, amongst other factors.

Community Transport Program

The Community Transport Program assists individuals who experience transport disadvantage due to physical, social, cultural and/or geographic factors. Individuals who do not qualify for the Commonwealth Home Support Program, NDIS or other support programs may be eligible for the Community Transport Program.

Sydney's Cycling Future

Sydney's Cycling Future is the regional cycling strategy for Greater Sydney. It presents a new direction in the way cycling in Sydney is planned, prioritised and provided for. This supports the change in culture in Sydney with more people choosing to ride a bike for transport. The focus is on improving cycling for everyday transport.

Local

Cumberland Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027

The Cumberland Community Strategic Plan establishing a central vision for Cumberland, balancing a commitment to social and cultural cohesion, the local economy, our natural and built environments. One outcome of the plan is for Cumberland to have a range of transport options that connect our town centres and to wider Sydney. Other themes in the plan are also impacted by availability of safe and affordable transport options, including employment, safety, accessibility and access to public spaces and facilities.

Cumberland 2030: Our Local Strategic Planning Statement

Cumberland 2030 describes how the Cumberland area will develop and grow, consistent with State and local policy, and community aspirations. It sets a land use vision and establishes priorities and actions for Council to manage growth and change. The document also outlines how it aligns with Region and District Plans. The theme of access and movement is prevalent throughout the plan, particularly evident in Planning Priority 2: Advocating for a range of transport options that connect our town centres and employment hubs, both locally and to Greater Sydney.

Cumberland Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021

The Cumberland Disability Inclusion Action Plan offers a framework to guide Council in its responsibilities to ensure people with disability have full and equal access to the facilities, programs, services and information that Council provides. The plan recognises that transport accessibility is critical to liveable communities where everyone can participate. Action 2.3.1 is to undertake research on transport disadvantage in the Cumberland LGA, which will inform accessibility improvements and advocacy projects.

Cumberland Youth Strategy 2017-2021

The Cumberland Youth Strategy provides a clear direction for Council and partners to support better outcomes for young people and make Cumberland a vibrant place of opportunity where all young people are supported to learn, be safe, belong, work and contribute. Action 1.2.1 of the strategy is to undertake research on transport disadvantage for local young people to inform advocacy to the NSW government. This action acknowledges the difficulties in finding employment for young people without suitable transport options.

Cumberland Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plan 2018-2022

The Cumberland Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plan addresses high priority crime issues and improvements to community safety. Safety at train stations was identified as a priority through community engagement, in particular travelling to and from stations at night time. Action 8.3.2 of the strategy is to undertake consultation with the community to determine the extent of need for additional night-time public transport services and involve the community in advocating for additional services from key transport hubs. Safety in town centres and road and pedestrian safety are other transport-related community safety issues.

Cumberland Children and Families Strategy 2019-2023

The Cumberland Children and Families Strategy aims to improve the lives of children and their families and ensure that Cumberland is a place where children are safe, have access to quality education and care, have a voice and multiple avenues to participate in community life. This strategy recognises the importance of transport in providing opportunities for children and families to participate in activities and programs in their community and increase community connection. Action 3.2c of the strategy is to undertake research on transport barriers and needs for children and families in the Cumberland area.

Role of local government

Local government has a number of roles with relation to transport. Councils own and maintain the majority of footpaths and roads in their local area and also have responsibility for other infrastructure that influence transport patterns, including street lighting and bus shelters. Councils may also run local community shuttles and transport options for council-run events.

Although public transport is largely the domain of state government, Council has a role in collaborating with relevant agencies to provide the local context in service delivery and advocate for improved local services. Furthermore, local government plays a key part in supporting and connecting community organisations and local service providers in developing grassroots initiatives to improve community mobility.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research aim and scope

The aim of this research is to understand the key transport and mobility issues in the Cumberland community. Central to this aim is identifying whether community members are able to get to where they want, how and when they want. It is intended that this research to be of use to not just Council, but also for other stakeholders in the Cumberland community.

In alignment with the aim, the objectives are:

- To establish baseline data on the normative and felt transport and mobility needs for the Cumberland community;
- To support transport-related advocacy;
- To identify key areas of change to improve transport and mobility for the local community; and
- To inform local initiatives and programs and provision of transport options.

The research considers all forms of transport, as it is recognised that transport options are dependent on location. The scope of the research is limited to the Cumberland community, defined as anyone who lives, works or visits the Cumberland LGA.

Methodology

The research adopted a mixed methods methodology, with an emphasis on community engagement to identify felt needs. It primarily involved the following activities:

- Literature and policy review, followed by interviews with academics and peak bodies, to understand key considerations and contemporary trends in the field of transport needs and best practice methods for research;
- Analysis of various quantitative data sources to identify areas of particular transport need and/or low service provision.
- An inventory of local transport services to identify supply and gaps; and
- A range of engagement opportunities to gain community and stakeholder perspectives on the topic, understand travel needs and identify priority areas of change. These activities took place between August 2019 and March 2020. A list of participating groups can be found in Appendix 1.

Online survey and mapping tool

An online survey and interactive mapping tool were hosted on Council's Have Your Say website. This website also acted as an online portal for information relating to the project, including objectives, key dates, and contacts. The website could be translated into a variety

of languages using its automatic language translation function. Participants were offered the chance to win one of ten \$50 gift vouchers for completing an online survey

Intercept surveys at key locations

Intercept surveys were conducted in major gathering spots to engage community members who may not usually participate in Council activities. Locations and times were chosen to ensure even distribution across the LGA at a variety of timeslots. The schedule is in Table 2. Participants were offered the chance to win one of ten \$50 gift vouchers for completing an intercept survey.

Table 2: Intercept survey schedule

Date	Time	Location
Fri 31 Jan 2020	1:30pm-3:30pm	Guildford Town Centre
Fri 31 Jan 2020	4:00pm-6:00pm	Auburn Town Centre
Tues 4 Feb 2020	11:30am-1:30pm	Portico Plaza Shopping Centre, Toongabbie
Tues 4 Feb 2020	2:00pm-4:00pm	Pemulwuy Marketplace
Sat 15 Feb 2020	10:00am-12:00pm	Dellwood St Shops, South Granville
Sat 15 Feb 2020	1:00pm-3:00pm	Greystanes Shopping Centre
Tues 18 Feb 2020	1:00pm-3:00pm	Granville Town Centre
Tues 18 Feb 2020	4:00pm-6:00pm	Westmead Railway Station
Thurs 20 Feb 2020	3:00pm-5:00pm	Lidcombe TAFE
Thurs 20 Feb 2020	6:00pm-8:00pm	Merrylands Railway Station

Short form surveys at Council contact points

DL-sized surveys were distributed to Council libraries, customer service centres, community centres and early education and care centres. The short format provided an alternate engagement avenue and encouraged participation from time-poor individuals. The reverse side of the short survey provided information about the project and how to provide further feedback.

Consultative committees

Council's advisory committees provide a forum for the community to engage with Council and provide advice to inform Council's policy, program, and service delivery. The following committees were engaged at their respective meetings through focus group-style discussions:

- Former Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities (CALD) Committee
- Former Youth Committee
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative (ATSIC) Committee
- Access and Safety Committee

Interagencies and networking forums

Representation was made at various Council-hosted interagencies and networking forums to inform community organisations and service providers of the project and seek high-level perspectives.

Face-to-face community engagement activities

A number of face-to-face engagement activities were arranged to gain perspectives from target groups, these were:

- A child-friendly engagement activity was delivered to a number of long day care centres and out of school hours care centres. The activities involved children

explaining their favourite, least favourite and common modes of travel through a mix of dot voting, written letters and storytelling;

- Vox-pops at Council events;
- One-on-one interviews were conducted with community members upon request; and
- Focus groups at service providers and community organisations to engage their clientele.

Key stakeholder interviews

Semi-structured interviews were held with key stakeholders, including transport operators, internal Council teams, community organisations and service providers to ascertain stakeholder priorities and the experiences of front-line workers.

Research limitations

For some consultation activities, participation was based on self-selection, as such the sample population engaged with does not necessarily represent the Cumberland community. While actions were taken to mitigate this impact, such as interviews with service providers and community organisations and intercept surveys at key locations throughout the LGA, consultation participants generally were more likely to be public transport users and English-only speakers compared to the broader Cumberland population. Key communities were also limited in their representation, especially those experiencing social isolation.

The COVID-19 pandemic and associated social distancing restrictions also impacted response rate. A number of face-to-face consultation activities were cancelled, including focus groups and stakeholder interviews. Return rate of short surveys from libraries, community centres and other contact points was also impacted due to their respective closures.

Research participants

Across all consultation methods, 755 community members and stakeholder representatives provided their perspective of travelling in the Cumberland community, broken down as follows:

- 124 online survey responses;
- 5 online mapping tool contributors;
- 4 email submissions;
- 154 short form survey returns;
- 182 face-to-face intercept surveys;
- Face-to-face engagement, including focus groups, vox-pops and interviews, with 161 community members;
- Interviews and focus groups with 81 representatives from key stakeholders;
- 15 interviews with academics and peak bodies; and
- Interviews with 22 Council staff involved in helping the community get around.

Participant demographic information collected varied between consultation method. The profile of online and intercept survey participants is shown the figures below.

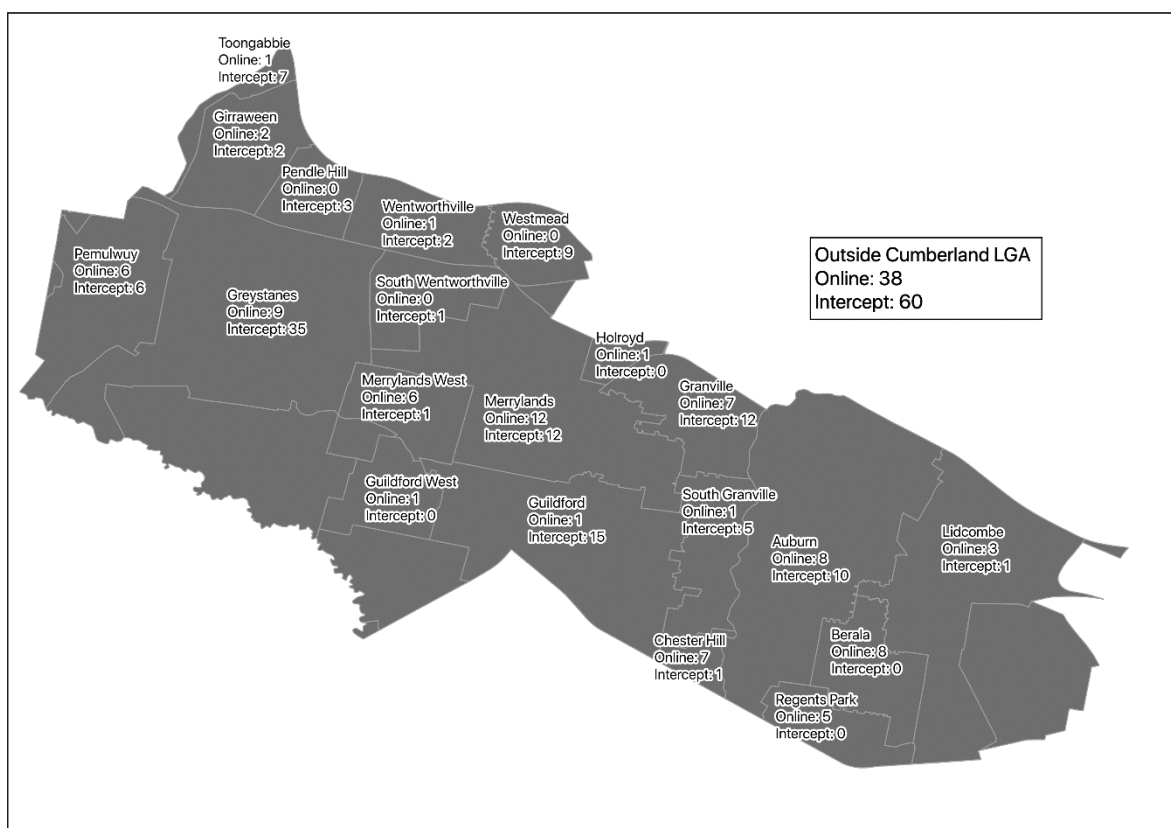


Figure 2: Suburb of residence of survey participants

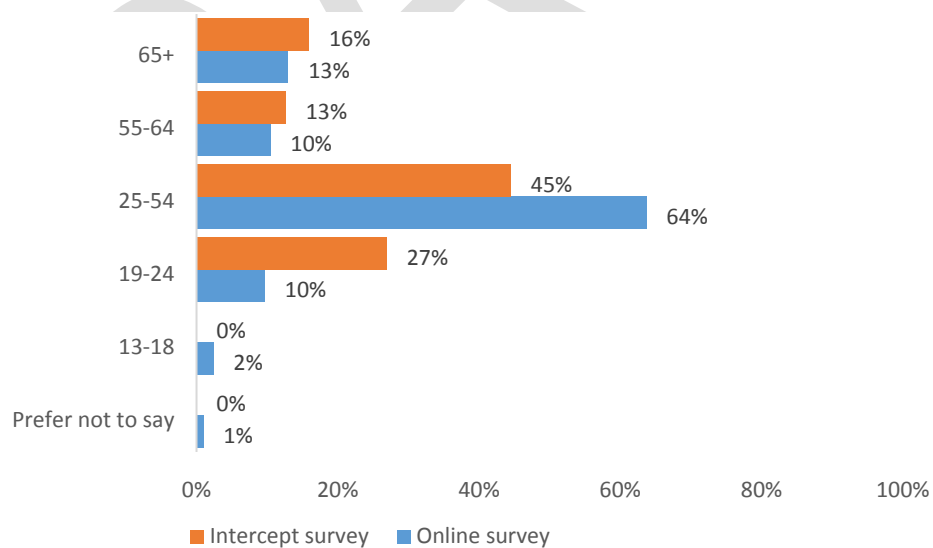


Figure 3: Age of survey participants

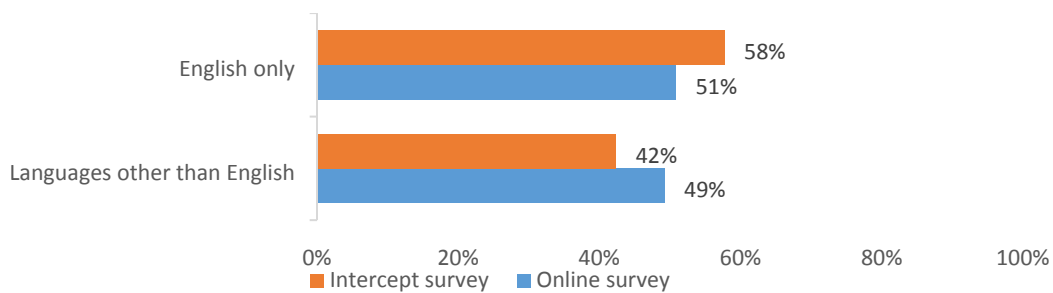


Figure 4: Language spoken by survey participants

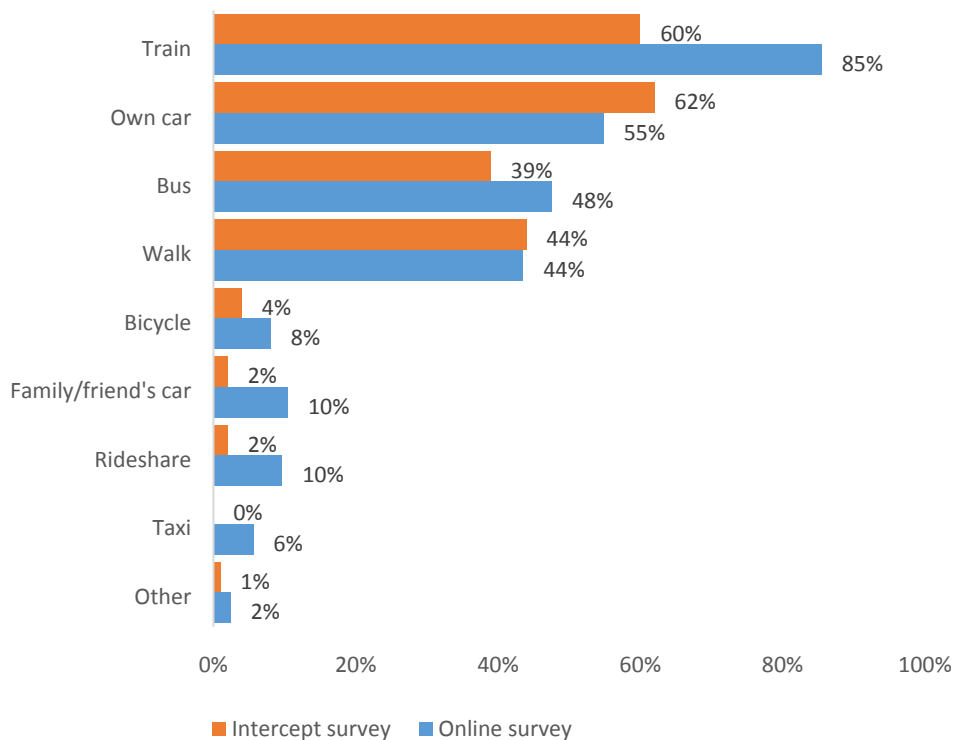


Figure 5: Modes of transport frequently used by survey participants

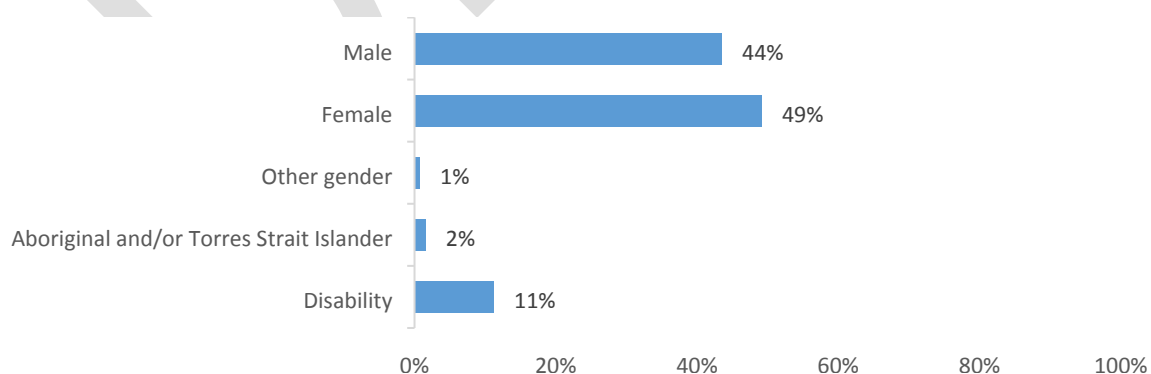


Figure 6: Other demographic characteristics of online survey participants

A SNAPSHOT OF TRANSPORT IN CUMBERLAND

Community profile

The following section provides an overview of the Cumberland community, based on Australian Bureau of Statistics Census of Population and Housing data, with a focus on characteristics that are relevant to getting around.

2019 Cumberland population: 241, 521

Table 3: Specific characteristics of Cumberland residents

	Cumberland 2016	Cumberland 2011	Greater Sydney 2016
Children aged 0-11	17.2%	17.4%	15.2%
Teenagers aged 12-17	6.6%	7.7%	6.9%
Older residents aged 55+	20.7%	20.4%	24.8%
Older residents aged 65+	11.2%	10.9%	13.9%
Low or no English proficiency	14.7%	13.0%	6.5%
Have need for assistance	5.8%	5.3%	4.9%
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	0.6%	0.7%	1.5%

2016 Cumberland households: 67, 818

Table 4: Specific characteristics of Cumberland households

	Cumberland 2016	Cumberland 2011	Greater Sydney 2016
Median household income	\$1,377	<i>Not applicable</i>	\$1,745
Weekly income less than \$1,000	32.5%	<i>Not applicable</i>	26.0%
Households with children under 15	22.3%	40.0%	35.3%
Households with two or more cars	44.0%	40.0%	46.0%
Lone person households	17.1%	18.3%	20.4%
Households with no cars	11.3%	13.6%	10.7%
Forced car ownership	8.7%	<i>Not available</i>	5.8%

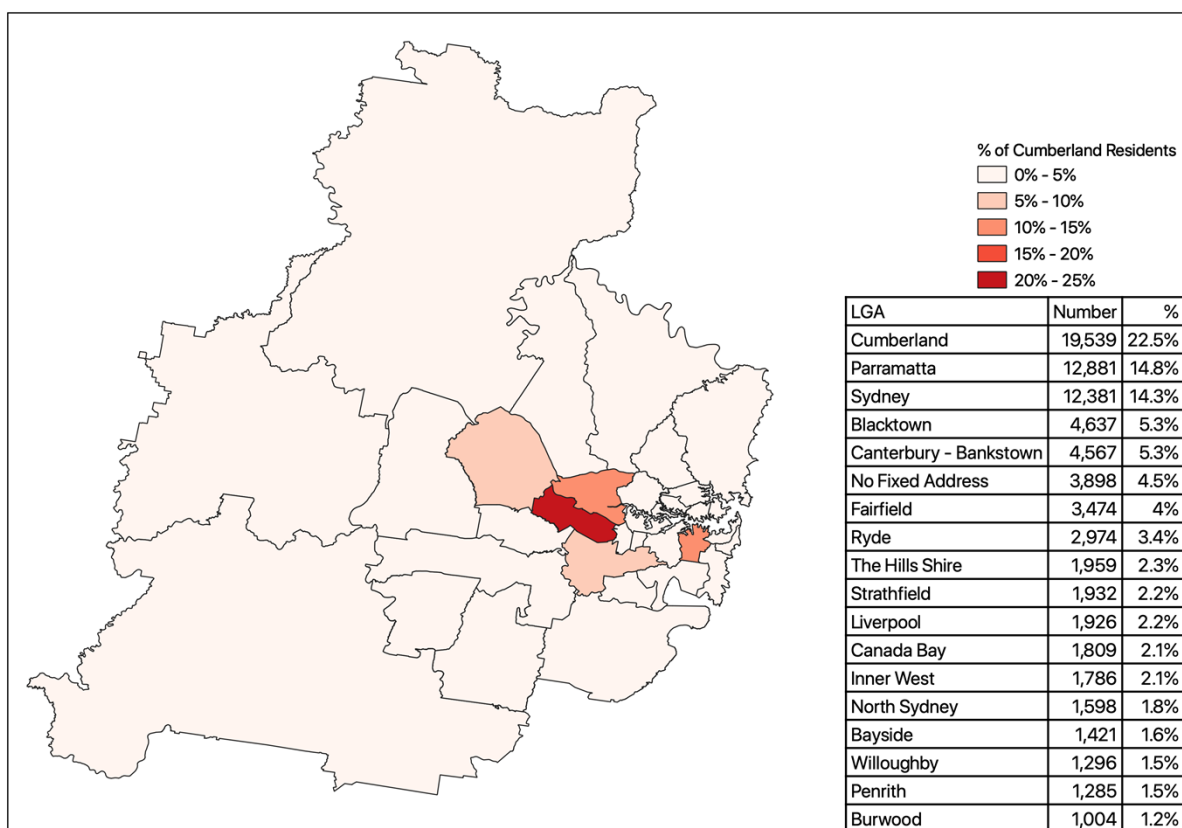


Figure 7: Percentage of Cumberland residents by their place of work

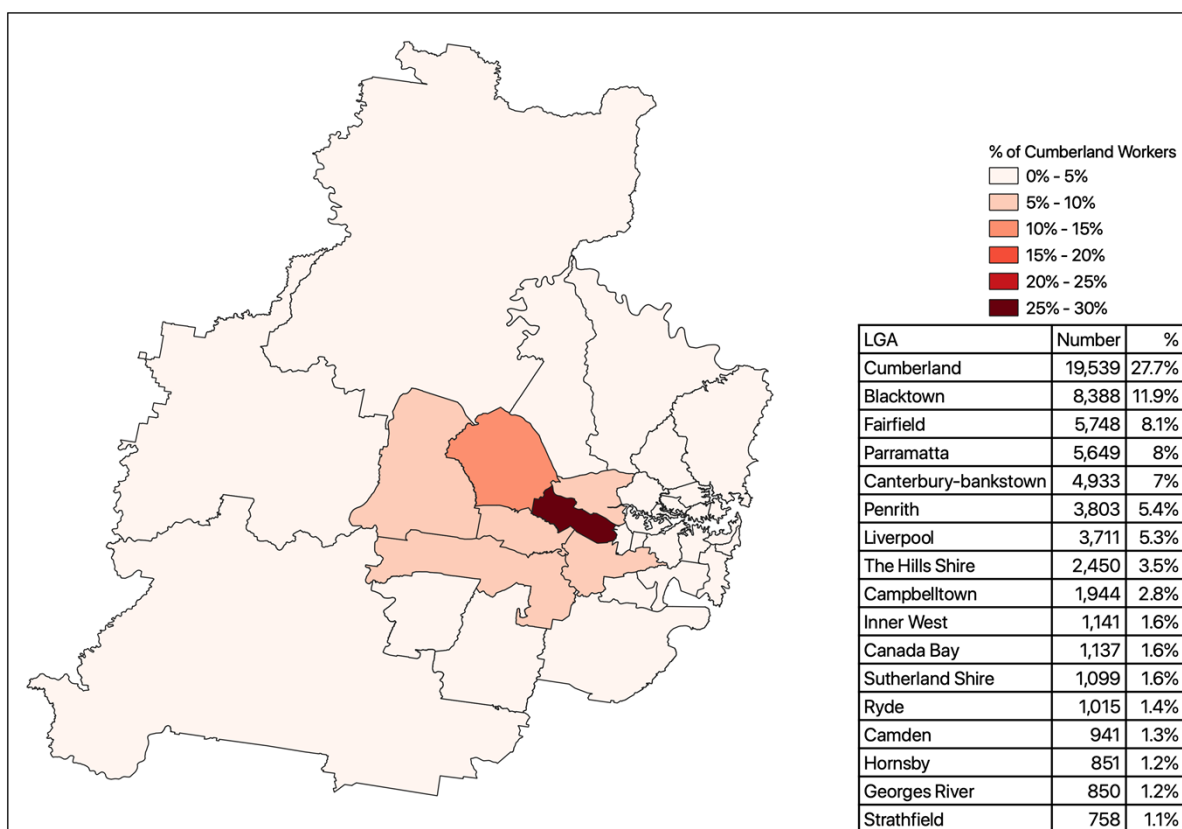


Figure 8: Percentage of Cumberland workers by their place of residence

Table 5: Modes of travel to work for employed persons aged 15 and over

	Cumberland 2016	Cumberland 2011	Greater Sydney 2016
Car - as driver	54.0%	54.0%	52.7%
Train	23.3%	21.9%	16.2%
Car - as passenger	5.1%	5.9%	3.9%
Worked at home	2.6%	1.7%	4.4%
Bus	2.3%	1.9%	6.1%
Walked only	2.0%	2.3%	4.0%
Other	1.1%	0.7%	1.1%
Truck	1.0%	1.5%	0.9%
Taxi	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%
Motorbike	0.3%	0.2%	0.7%
Bicycle	0.2%	0.2%	0.7%
Tram or Ferry	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%

Table 6: Trips by travel mode on an average weekday (Source: Transport for NSW Household Travel Survey 2018/19)

	Cumberland	Greater Sydney
Car - as driver	45.3%	47.9%
Car - as passenger	22.6%	20.9%
Walked only	17.5%	17.5%
Train	10.1%	6.3%
Bus	3.8%	5.5%
Other	0.6%	1.8%

Table 7: Trips by travel purpose on an average weekday (Source: Transport for NSW Household Travel Survey 2018/19)

	Cumberland	Greater Sydney
Social/recreation	29.7%	25.1%
Serve passenger	20.3%	18.5%
Commute	16.8%	17.4%
Shopping	16.4%	15.3%
Education/Child care	6.3%	9.6%
Work related business	5.4%	6.7%
Personal business	3.5%	5.2%
Other	1.6%	2.2%

Certain areas within the Cumberland LGA have higher proportions of these cohorts, these are shown in Figure 9. Data tables for suburbs can be found in Appendix 3.

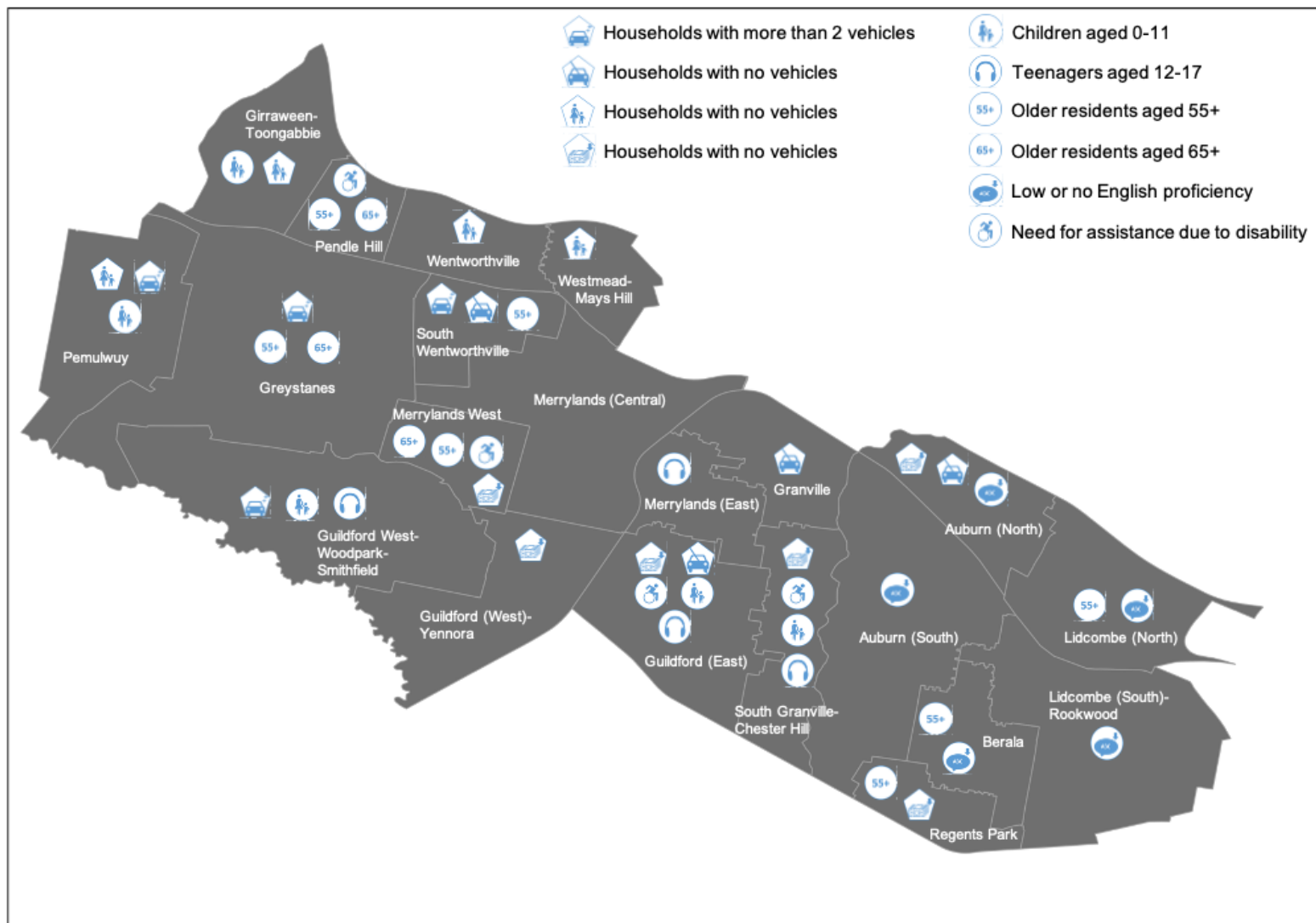


Figure 9: Areas within Cumberland with higher proportions of certain cohorts

The existing transport network

The Cumberland LGA is currently serviced by a number of major roads, train lines and bus routes. Community Wheels is the local community transport provider. Council also runs an Access Loop Bus that operates six days a week in the eastern part of the Cumberland LGA. The service includes 13 stops providing access to Council's Seniors Units, local shopping centres, train stations, libraries, community centres, the Auburn Botanic Gardens and Peacock Gallery and Auburn Hospital. On weekends, the service provides additional access to the Auburn Botanic Gardens and also stops at Granville Pool. This Access Loop Bus is under continuous review.

Trains

Three train services run through the Cumberland area: the T1 to Richmond, Emu Plains, the Sydney CBD and Hornsby, T2 to Leppington, Parramatta and the Sydney CBD and T5 to Richmond and Leppington. Generally, the T1 and T2 generally run to a 15 minute frequency and the T5 runs half hourly, however frequencies, stopping patterns and termini varies depending on the time and day. During the annual Cherry Blossom Festival at Auburn Botanic Gardens, all trains that run via Auburn Station stop at the Auburn Station. The T5 is unique for being the only Sydney Trains line that does not run via the Sydney CBD. The T6 that previously ran from Clyde to Carlingford has been replaced by a bus from Parramatta to Carlingford in preparation for the Parramatta Light Rail.

Buses

Cumberland has three regional bus routes. The T80 connects Parramatta to Liverpool through the industrial areas in Smithfield. It was the first bus rapid transit system to be built in Sydney and runs largely on dedicated bus lanes and busways. The M92 runs from Sutherland to Parramatta, with stops in Lidcombe and Bankstown. The M91 runs from Hurstville to Parramatta, via Bankstown and Granville. These services generally run every 10 minutes during the day on weekdays and have evening and weekend frequencies ranging from 15 minutes to half hourly. Over 35 other local bus routes with varying frequencies and operating hours service the rest of the Cumberland community.

An on-demand service operated by BRIDJ services Lidcombe, providing access to Sydney Olympic Park and Newington. This service is designed to cover the 'last mile' between transport hubs and the final destination and typically requires a phone app to book. The frequency ranges from 20 minutes in the peak and 30 to 45 minutes off peak. This service is not door-to-door and still runs to a predetermined route.

Roads

Cumberland Highway (Freame St, Emert St, Jersey Rd, Betts Rd, Warren Rd), Woodville Road and the A6 (Silverwaster Rd, St Hilliers Rd, Olympic Dr, Joseph St) form the major north-south road links, while the Western Motorway, Great Western Highway and Parramatta Road, are the major east-west road links.

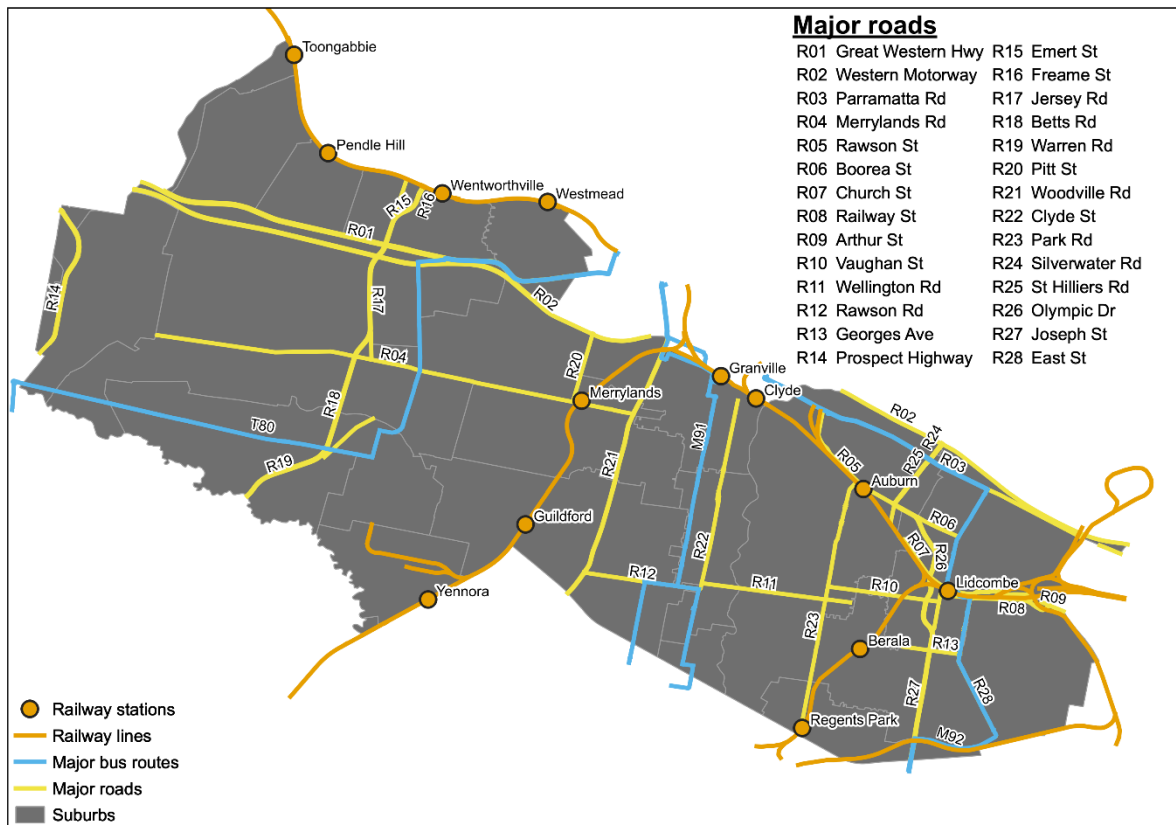


Figure 10: Key transport connections in the Cumberland LGA

The planned transport network

The three major transport infrastructure projects planned for the Cumberland LGA are the Sydney Metro West, Link to Western Sydney Airport and Link to Bankstown and Hurstville/Kogarah. These projects are shown in Figure 11. Construction for Sydney Metro West, which will link Westmead to the Sydney CBD via Parramatta, Sydney Olympic Park, Burwood and the Bays Precinct, is due to begin in late 2020. The other two projects are still in the early stages of planning and routes and stopping patterns have not been finalised.

Although not within the LGA, the Parramatta Light Rail project also has implications for transport for the Cumberland community. The T6 railway line from Clyde to Carlingford ceased to operate in January 2020 to be converted to the Parramatta Light Rail. This line previously provided an option for passengers traveling to Western Sydney University and Rosehill Gardens Racecourse. Parramatta Light Rail will not service Clyde station, however Cumberland community members in Westmead will have access to its Westmead terminus.

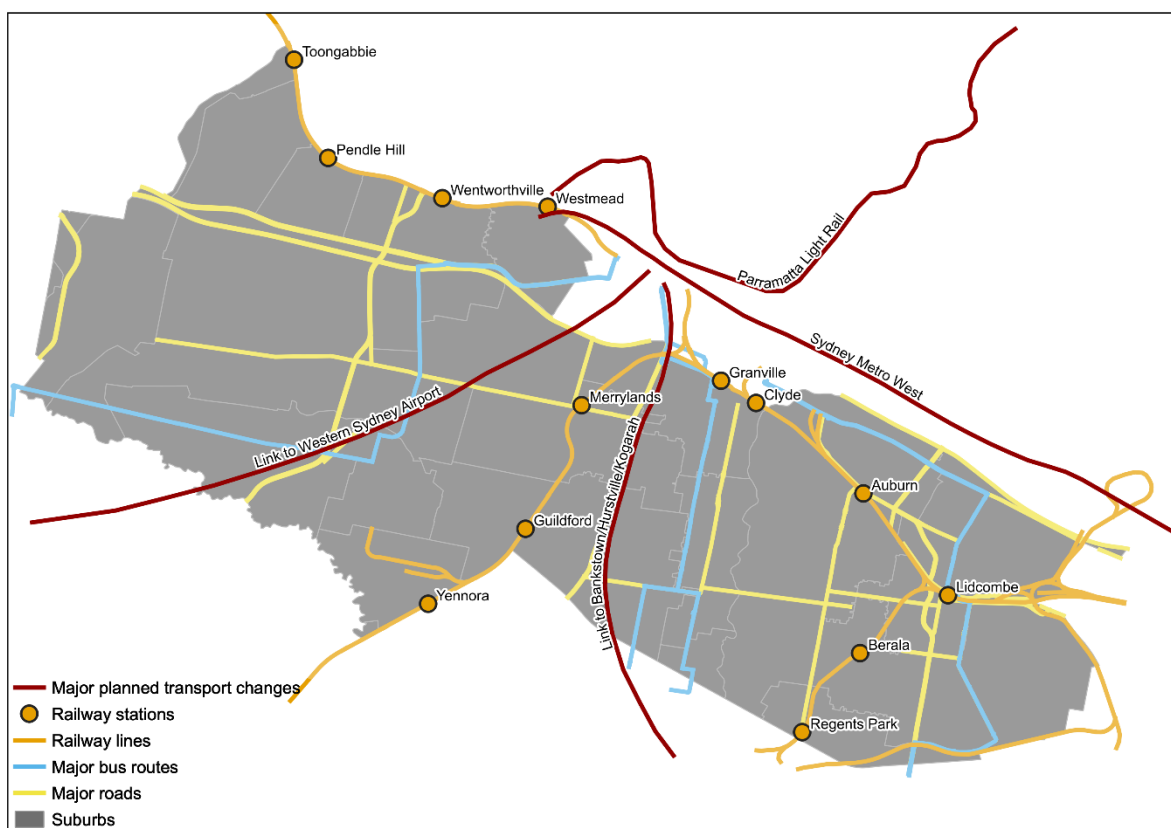
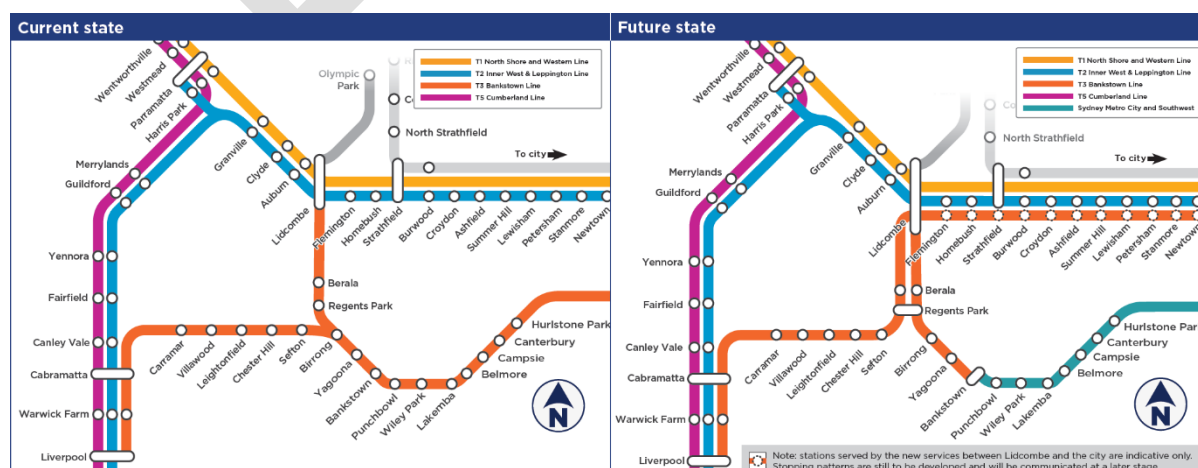


Figure 11: Future transport infrastructure changes in Cumberland. Routes are an indication only

The Sydney Metro Southwest project will convert the T3 railway line from Sydenham to Bankstown to metro standards. The T3 railway line currently services Lidcombe, Berala and Regents Park stations, providing a direct journey to the Sydney CBD. As a result, without changes to the current Sydney Trains system, Berala and Regents Park, and other stations west of Bankstown on the T3, will lose direct services to the Sydney CBD. In February 2020, Transport for NSW released three options for these stations, with the current and preferred options depicted in Figure 12. Should the preferred option be progressed, Lidcombe, Berala and Regents Park will have direct services to the Sydney CBD, Bankstown and Liverpool.

An inquiry into Sydney Metro Southwest was completed in April 2020, which recommended the Sydenham-Bankstown conversion not proceed and that project funds be allocated to develop new rail corridors. There has been no indication as to whether the T3 reconfiguration as described above would proceed if this recommendation were adopted.



RESEARCH FINDINGS

General findings

Travel destinations

Cumberland community members naturally travel to and from many different locations depending on their needs. Cumberland residents work all across Sydney, with most working locally or in Parramatta, the Sydney CBD, Blacktown or Campbelltown. Cumberland workers also live in all areas of Sydney, but the majority are local, or live in Blacktown, Fairfield, Parramatta, Canterbury-Bankstown and Penrith. With this in mind, links to these areas are key in supporting employment for the local community, including those who do not live or work on a train corridor. This is especially pertinent given a large number of those consulted who experienced difficulties getting around were often accessing their place of employment or seeking a job opportunity.

Other major destinations include local centres, medical precincts, educational institutions, recreational facilities and train stations. In particular, access to train stations was considered challenging, with low frequency and unreliable bus connections and limited commuter parking.

Bus contract regions often dictate how bus travellers get around, yet this does not necessarily reflect community travel patterns. For example, Pemulwuy has a high South Asian population, yet does not have any direct transport connections to local South Asian centres in Pendle Hill and Wentworthville, despite only being 3km away. The current spoke and hub model pushes individuals to travel first to one or more transport hubs (in this case, Parramatta), before they can travel to their final destination. As a result, individuals without cars may be forced to travel out of the area to access employment, education or other services. The impact is greater for those seeking community support, where an eligibility criteria is often place of residence.

Transport service standards

Transport for NSW has a set of transport service standards that transport operators abide by when providing transport services, known as the Integrated Public Transport Service Planning Guidelines. These guidelines outline expectations for frequency, reliability and operating hours. Despite these guidelines, general consensus is that frequency, reliability and operating hours for most buses in Cumberland are in need for improvement. Indeed, when asked what would make it easier for them to get around, two of the most cited responses were improved frequency and reliability.

The minimum frequency guideline for standard local bus routes is hourly. For the majority consulted, especially those who currently do not use public transport, hourly frequencies are too low, with most saying they would wait a maximum 20 minutes for a bus. The most mentioned factor associated with difficulties getting around revolve around frequency of services.

The frequency of the T5 train line is also unsatisfactory. Half-hourly peak services using four-carriage sets significantly reduces the capacity of this service to perform as an option to Parramatta and Blacktown, two key employment hubs for Cumberland residents. Morning train commutes on any line into the Sydney CBD are often at crush capacity and many local residents are forced to wait several trains before being able to board.

Frequency is generally highest during peak hours to serve commuters, however according to Transport for NSW's Household Transport Survey, almost half of trips by Cumberland

residents are for social/recreation and shopping purposes. This suggests that there is a need for transport services to consider travel demand for these purposes, not just peak commuting.

Service reliability is an issue. Community members expressed often being uncertain whether the bus they were waiting for had come and gone or if it was late. Unreliability, along with low frequencies and indirect services, often impact on a traveller's ability to make connecting services.

Typically, transport planning considers a site to be transport accessible if it is within a 400m radius of a bus stop, however for many people with mobility issues, this distance can prove difficult. Moreover, a blanket 400m radius can be misleading, especially when geographic barriers impede pedestrian permeability, such as waterways, major roads or railway lines.

Finally, operating hours of services often do not match the need of the community. This is the case for both conventional and community transport. The guideline for operating hours suggests that standard local bus services should generally operate from 5am to 7pm on weekdays and 9am to 6pm on weekends. This significantly reduces the capacity of community members to undertake activities after dark, whilst access to morning activities on weekends is also limited, such as community sport. Additionally, reduced or no services after dark disproportionately impacts shift workers.

The coverage of Cumberland's public transport network considering operating hours and frequency is shown in Figure 13: Map showing areas in Cumberland LGA within 400m of a bus or train stop with services running at least every 30minutes between 7am and 9pm every day. It shows all areas within 400m of a bus or train stop with services running at least every 30minutes between 7am and 9pm every day. It suggests that there are many areas where transport services can be improved to better suit community needs, especially Greystanes, Pendle Hill, Girraween, Pemulwuy, Auburn, Berala and Regents Park, as well as the industrial areas.

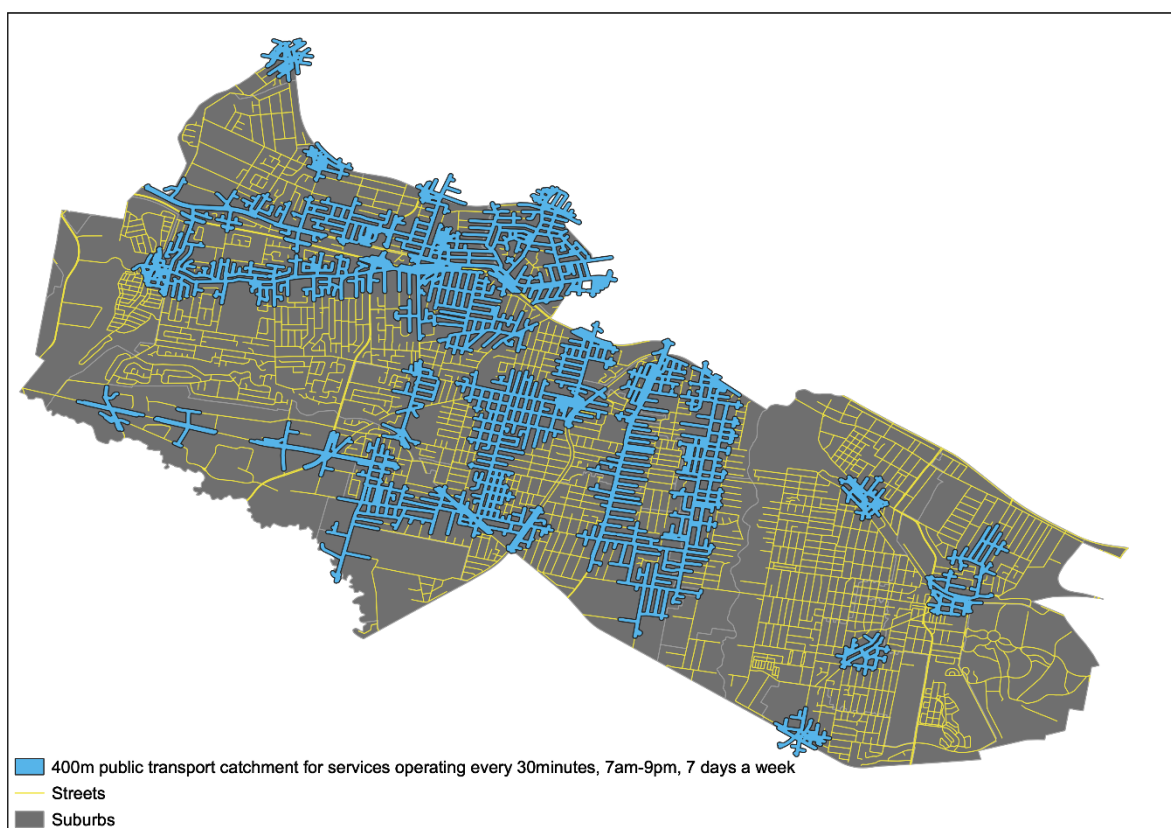


Figure 13: Map showing areas in Cumberland LGA within 400m of a bus or train stop with services running at least every 30minutes between 7am and 9pm every day.

Transport options

The dominant mode of transport in Cumberland is private vehicle. This is largely due to lack of efficient alternate transport options. Indeed, many consulted conceded it would be very difficult to get around if they lost access to their private vehicle. In most cases, transport to major transport hubs is relatively easy, however getting to destinations between hubs, when considering the associated transfers, can be challenging depending on factors such as convenience and directness of travel, reliability, who they are travelling with, time of day, cost and perceived safety. As a result, private vehicle travel is preferred.

For some, driving may not be an option, whether due to age, disability or cost of vehicle upkeep. Individuals travelling by public transport tend to face more difficulties getting around. The difficulties often stemmed from a combination of poor frequency or reliability of services and indirect routes. Travelling with shopping or children can also be challenging.

The On Demand bus service in Lidcombe and Newington is underutilised according to respondents, with particular criticism of its quasi-fixed route system where users have to book in advance and still walk to a pick up location that may not be close to their origin or destination. The route services both Cumberland and Parramatta LGAs.

A lack of alternative options leads to further complications if and when there are other issues in the network. Unexpected delays or cancellations occur and have previously lasted several hours. During these situations, where replacement services have not yet been deployed, travellers are often left stranded with no other option than to take a taxi or rideshare that may cost several times more than the original fare. This problem is often worsened by uncertainty as to when regular services will return.

Several route proposals were made throughout the consultation. These proposals all sought to increase the number of options community members had of getting from one place to another, especially in transport poor areas in Greystanes, Pemulwuy and Auburn. These areas are outlined in Appendix 2.

Travel support and information awareness

Regardless of the number of options available, there is often a lack of awareness of the services and support available to help the community get around. This is especially the case for community transport. The broader community has limited awareness of what community transport is, who it is for and how to access it. Several respondents requested medical transport, not realising community transport was an option.

In terms of conventional transport, community members were often unaware of where local services could take them. There is a general lack of understanding associated with Opal cards, including new contactless payment methods and confusion between different types of Opal cards. Knowledge of travel training services is limited, including amongst community organisations and service providers who support many individuals who would benefit from such a service.

There is a large shift towards web-based information, however many cohorts in the community still rely on paper-based and telephone information. This includes signage and timetabling information at bus stops, which is inconsistently implemented and often missing across the area. The web-based information and phone apps can be inaccessible for community members with disabilities, with limited English proficiency, with low technological expertise and/or without smart devices. One alternative is to use the 131 500 enquiries line, however wait times render this option less desirable, considering the time-sensitive nature of transport.

Transport data

From the service and transport planning perspective, good and useful data can be difficult to obtain. Data on journey to work is collected every five years in the Census, however, this only paints part of the transport picture. Transport for NSW's annual Household Travel Survey presents travel patterns of residents on an average weekday, however this is limited to mode of transport and reason for travel. Furthermore, limiting results to the average weekday omits weekend travel, when it is often more difficult to get around due to reduced services.

Opal data is made available for bus operators, however the systems on which it is made available can be hard to navigate and the data itself is confusing. Acknowledging privacy issues of publicly releasing detailed opal data, aggregated travel pattern data at the local level would be useful for other agencies that help the community get around, including councils, community transport providers, community organisations and service providers.

Finally, it was acknowledged that bus networks in areas not undergoing significant growth seldom change. In conducting service reviews, operators use Opal data and community feedback, amongst other indicators, to justify service changes. In areas with limited coverage, Opal data and community feedback can be non-existent, but this does not necessarily mean there is no demand. Language barriers and lack of awareness of reporting mechanisms can result in the lack of community feedback, whilst limited services may force community members to use other, less preferred, modes of transport.

Walkability

Walkability is a critical component of transport accessibility and mobility. Factors contributing to walkability include shade, amenity, footpath condition, directness of travel, accessibility and pedestrian safety.

Council allocates funds toward constructing and maintaining footpaths in its annual budget. Council recognises that there are large sections of the Cumberland LGA that do not have footpaths and prioritises these projects to ensure that the maximum community benefit is realised within the budgetary constraints.

Related to walkability is the cycling environment. Several respondents commented that they would prefer to cycle, as a low-cost form of transport, however local cycling infrastructure is poor. Similarly, the presence of bus stop infrastructure, such as shelters and seats, can dramatically improve experience for those taking public transport, especially for those with mobility issues and during periods of inclement weather. Most bus stop infrastructure is the domain of Council, with shelters typically provided in partnership with an advertising company.

Roles and responsibilities

Transport and mobility is an subject that relates to many different organisations and agencies, including Transport for NSW, NSW Health, NSW Department of Education and Training, local government, bus operators, community service providers and many others. This leads to ambiguity as to the where the roles and responsibilities of certain agencies start and end and may lead to individual aspects of transport being neglected. A particular example is the overlapping responsibilities of Health and Transport in community and medical transport. For consumers, it can lead to confusion as to who to approach to seek assistance.

Sydney Metro Southwest and Inner West Line projects

These major transport infrastructure changes naturally attracted public comment during the consultation phase for this research. Major criticisms of the various projects centred around the allocation of public funds toward existing transport corridors rather than expanding the network to underserved areas and changes in stopping patterns for certain stations resulting in reduced services.

Cohort-specific findings

Children and families

Travelling with children can be challenging for families, with many opting to drive for convenience and to avoid having to pay multiple transport fares. Travelling by public transport is difficult with prams, especially during peak hours due to limited space on buses and trains. As children grow older, concerns surrounding child safety and supervision arise, particularly when travelling with multiple children. This is compounded by challenges that arise as co-curricular commitments grow, increasing household travel requirements and dependency on parents and guardians where alternate transport options are not available. Similarly, trips with multiple intermediate destinations are inefficient and impractical by public transport, further increasing the reliance on private vehicles.

From the children's perspective, their preferred way of getting around is by train and bus, however they mostly travel by car. Children who live in areas with fewer public transport options seem to be more reliant on their parents for mobility and have more limited understanding of how the public transport system works. Older primary-aged children would like to be able to travel independently, however safety concerns present a barrier for parents, especially amongst CALD communities.

The current implementation of School Opal cards is problematic and can lead to confusion. Many parents and students do not fully understand when School Opal cards are valid and when to use the Child/Youth Opal. Restricting the free travel to only home-school journeys encourages children to go home after school, even if their parents or guardian are still at work, rather than staying somewhere with responsible adult supervision. It also precludes

participation in extra-curricular activities and attendance at off-site after hours school care. It is counterintuitive that School Opal cards are invalid for school excursions.

For schools and early childhood education and care services, excursions are increasingly difficult to arrange. If travelling by public transport, there is the logistical challenge of ensuring every child has a valid Opal card with enough money, as well as delays caused by every student tapping on and off when boarding and alighting the vehicle. Private bus hire, on the other hand, is expensive.

Young people

An increasingly mobile cohort, transport and mobility is paramount for young people for accessing education, employment and social and recreational activities. Nevertheless, for some young people, getting around can be difficult. Challenges relating to Opal cards for children and families also apply to young people in high school.

Another issue this cohort faces is obtaining a driver's licence. With limited transport options in some areas of the LGA, private vehicle travel is the optimal mode of travel, particularly in the night. Having a driver's licence opens up employment opportunities and can provide greater independence. However, some young people either do not have access to a car to accrue the hours required to progress to the provisional P1 licence, do not know a full licence holder who is able to supervise or cannot afford expensive driving lessons. Many workplaces still require a driver's licence from prospective employees, therefore not having a licence also reduces employability.

Seniors

For many seniors, losing their licence can feel like the loss of their independence. Often this is most evident for individuals who have relied on private vehicle transport for the majority of their lives and as a result, are not familiar with the other available options. In Cumberland, large percentages of seniors also live in transport poor areas in Greystanes, Merrylands West, Pendle Hill and Regents Park, exacerbating the situation.

Transport to medical services, or lack thereof, is of concern for seniors. There seems to be a lack of awareness of existing medical transport, including services provided by Community Wheels. Moreover, access to specialised medical support often requires travel outside the local area, which community transport cannot facilitate.

Finally, in order to be eligible for community transport, seniors must be registered with MyAgedCare and the Commonwealth Home Support Program. Many seniors have described the registration process as overly complex and difficult and this can be a barrier to accessing required transport services.

People with disabilities

Despite progress made on accessibility and mobility for people with disabilities, getting around still presents a challenge for many. Limited walkability in certain areas is a significant impediment for people using mobility aids, while accessible spots on buses can be inaccessible on many peak hour buses. Peak hour services can also be intimidating for some, especially those who experience frequent sensory overloads. People with disabilities have also described instances of bullying from fellow passengers and indifference from transport personnel, resulting in fears for personal safety when travelling.

It is recognised that accessibility upgrades for all public transport stops is not viable, however significant improvements should be made for train stations at minimum. People with visual impairments are not able to read indicator boards, announcements are often unclear and tactile ground surface indicators are frequently missing, resulting in confusion and misdirection. Staff at staffed train stations have been noted as helpful when they are

available, however staffed hours are too short and ideally more stations should be staffed to provide assistance when required, including for access to the correct platform and purchasing fares.

Information about the Transport Access Program and associated station lift installations have not been adequately publicised, with a lack of awareness of new lift openings. This results in people using mobility aids continuing to travel on suboptimal routes, not realising that a better option is available. Advertising at the station is insufficient as individuals would not alight at the station if they did not realise it was accessible to them.

Although the NDIS includes funding for transport, this amount often is not enough. The Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme is another concession available to people with disabilities, however the eligibility criteria appears somewhat discretionary, with many people with a disability rejected due to having too mild a disability.

Low income earners

Transport costs often constitutes a large portion of an individual's or household's spending. For low income earners, the cost of transport can therefore be a barrier to accessing necessary services, employment or education. In other cases, some may choose to compromise on other household expenditure to be able to get around.

The current minimum top up value for Opal cards at retailers and machines is \$20 for adult and \$10 for concessions. Data collated by the Grattan Institute explains that 10% of Australian households have less than \$90 in their bank account, and 20% have less than \$500². For individuals and households living paycheck to paycheck, this amount can be a significant amount to pay at a time. The minimum top up values for online payment methods is half of the face-to-face methods (Adult: \$10; Concession: \$5). Contactless payments through phones and credit or debit cards removes the minimum top up value issue for some, but not for those without an accepted device or card or on a concession.

Cumberland has a significant number of households that could be considered experiencing forced car ownership. Almost one in ten households have a total weekly income of \$1,000 or less, yet own two or more cars. These households are pushed toward owning multiple private vehicles to meet the travel demands of their household where alternatives do not exist.

Culturally and linguistically diverse communities, refugees and people seeking asylum

Refugees and people seeking asylum can access concession fares by applying through a community service provider. Information is available in various languages outlining the process of obtaining the concession, however this is in written form. Some new arrivals in the Cumberland community are illiterate in their own language, therefore translated spoken (rather than written) materials and use of other communication methods are required, such as online information videos, in-app audio transcriptions of journeys and multilingual transport staff. Journey planner apps in different languages are being developed³.

On a similar note, language barriers can result in inability to read station displays and signs, while transport personnel may not have the intercultural or linguistic ability to assist. Although some multilingual resources about how to take public transport in NSW are available online, the information is sparse and does not cover important subjects, in

² Coates & Cogwill 2020

³ Open Data Hub 2020

particular how to use an Opal card, concessions and contactless payment. This can also apply to the broader CALD community.

Cultural norms can also influence travel behaviour. In some cultures, women and girls are discouraged from taking public transport or driving, resulting in reduced mobility for females. In other cases, experiences from their home countries can influence their opinion of safety on public transport. Individuals from visibly diverse CALD backgrounds are also more likely to experience racism when taking public transport, increasing the feeling of unsafe.

OPPORTUNITIES

As a result of the research and engagement, a number of opportunities have arisen. These opportunities seek to improve mobility outcomes for the Cumberland community primarily through a range of grassroots initiatives. Advocacy positions are also established, focussing on high-level policy changes that enable the community to get around more easily. At the time of writing this report, many local organisations are operating at limited capacity due to COVID-19. As such, the opportunities that have been listed here are subject to the capacity of relevant stakeholders and act more as a springboard for future actions and conversations. The potential collaborators listed are suggestions of the relevant stakeholders that would be valuable to the respective discussions.

Local initiatives

Travel training

Potential collaborators: Cumberland Council Community Development Directorate, Easy-Go-Connect, local community organisations and schools

The aim of travel training is to provide individuals and groups the skills and confidence to get around independently. Travel training is tailored to the needs of the clients and usually involves accompanied trips to and from regular destinations. Although organisations target their travel training at specific cohorts, such as Vision Australia and Guide Dogs Australia, each LGA in Sydney has a community transport provider that offers the service free to anyone who may need it. For Cumberland, Easy-Go-Connect is the broader community travel training provider. This service is funded by Transport for NSW. Travel training does not necessarily have to be a formal program provided by an organisation. Resources for those who want to provide travel training to friends and family could be more widely promoted.

There is an opportunity to promote Easy-Go-Connect's travel training program as awareness of it is limited across the community and the sector, yet can significantly improve independent mobility outcomes for a client at no cost. For parents and guardians with safety concerns for their children, travel training can also break down the barrier and encourage them to allow their children to become more independent.

Council delivers civic education programs in different languages for the community, and an opportunity also exists to develop and implement a travel training component to complement existing programs to support people from CALD backgrounds navigate the transport system. Naturally, such a program could be tailored for other communities as well. There are opportunities to promote to the community sector and community leaders/advocates to increase awareness and to partner with local services, schools and community networks especially those working with new arrivals, seniors, people who are isolated or from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Licence suspension and cancellation assistance

Potential collaborators: Cumberland Council Community Development Directorate, Community Wheels Inc., Service NSW

The suspension of an individual's driver's licence, especially due to age, can feel like the loss of their independence. Often this is most evident for individuals who heavily relied on private vehicle transport. To combat this, there is an opportunity to work with Service NSW and Transport for NSW to provide support for those who have lost their licence in the form of travel training and other resources to familiarise them with local travel alternatives, including community transport.

Learner driver mentoring program

Potential collaborators: Local youth services, bus operators

Acknowledging that current public transport service standards may not accommodate certain types of work, especially shift work, there is an opportunity for a learner driver mentoring program. Youth services noted that many young people find it difficult to obtain the hours required to obtain their provisional P1 licence, whether due to their parents not knowing how to drive or not having a car. Such a scheme would recruit and train volunteers to help learner drivers achieve their hours. Many workplaces require prospective employees to hold a driver's licence, whether or not they will be driving on the job. As such, this scheme would have the added benefit of increasing the young person's employability.

Many youth services noted difficulties in providing transport for programs, especially after dark. There may be a partnership opportunity for local youth services and bus operators to deliver a bus driving training program for local young people, who would then be able to provide transport for the youth service. Not only would this be a vocational opportunity for the young person, it could significantly reduce the cost burden associated with hiring a bus driver after hours.

Granny trolleys

Potential collaborators: Cumberland Council Community Development Directorate, local businesses

For those without private vehicles, transporting shopping can be difficult. A simple solution may be to provide reusable shopping bags on wheels, also known as granny trolleys, for those who require it. This would complement Council's existing community giveaways, including beehives and native plants. Partnerships could be formed with local men's sheds or sewing groups to expand the concept.

Bicycle infrastructure

Potential collaborators: Cumberland Council Environment and Planning Directorate

A more detailed review of local cycling infrastructure is required to understand and prioritise the cycling-related needs and gaps in Cumberland. Part of this work is to be delivered in alignment with Cumberland 2030: Our Local Strategic Planning Statement.

Transport for people with disabilities

Potential collaborators: Cumberland Council Community Development Directorate, Transport for NSW, Community Wheels, local disability services, TAFE NSW, local transport operators

Transport accessibility for people with disabilities requires significant improvement. Such improvements should address the whole of system, not just boarding and alighting. This would include trip planning, ticket purchasing and access to the point of boarding. Transport for NSW's Disability Inclusion Action Plan includes an action to design an accessible transport phone app for people with disability, however this would only address part of the issue.

An opportunity exists to explore the viability of larger scale changes to improve the experience for people with disabilities. These could include quiet carriages on suburban

trains, talking buses that announce the route and destination of an arriving bus, alternate fare purchasing methods, increased staffing and trip planning systems that considers the accessibility of the origin and the destination. Partnerships with local education institutes could be leveraged to facilitate such an exploration in collaboration with people with lived experience, for example through student research projects.

Bus stop and train station infrastructure and information

Potential collaborators: Cumberland Council Works and Infrastructure Directorate, Transport for NSW, bus operators

Currently, many local bus stops lack proper signage and timetabling information. Budget permitting, an audit could be conducted to prioritise and install appropriate signage and information. This audit could also consider the availability of seating and shade and seek funding to prioritise the installation of these amenities in areas of high need.

Timetabling information at bus stops is difficult to understand and the writing is often very small. There is an opportunity to work with Transport for NSW and bus operators to revisit timetable templates, and if possible, provide a map alongside to indicate the route and intermediary destinations.

At train stations, where patronage is higher and infrastructure is better, consideration should be made to display information in major local community languages. With increasing use of electronic noticeboards, this should be relatively cost effective and provide a significant community benefit for those with limited English proficiency. The development of new stations presents further opportunities to integrate this into the design phase.

Local community language speaker badges for transport personnel

Potential collaborators: Cumberland Council Community Development Directorate, bus operators, Transport for NSW, local community organisations

Another simple opportunity to improve travel experience for people with limited English proficiency would be to establish a badge system for transport personnel indicating any community languages spoken. This would encourage anyone needing assistance to ask for help in a language in which they are comfortable.

Cultural competency and disability awareness training for transport personnel

Potential collaborators: Transport for NSW, bus operators, Multicultural NSW, Cumberland Council Community Development Directorate, Anti-Discrimination NSW, local community organisations

Suggestions have been made for transport personnel to undertake cultural competency and disability awareness training, as well as mental health training. This is to provide them with the tools to address discrimination on board and at stations. It would also allow them to better understand and address the needs of the wide variety of passengers that use their services.

Local transport guides

Potential collaborators: Local schools and early childhood education and care services, bus operators, Transport for NSW, Cumberland Council Community Development Directorate

Local transport guides are easy-read resources that depict local transport options and destinations. They can serve as an introduction to local facilities, services and active and public transport routes. A primary objective of these guides would be to increase community awareness of what is available locally, increasing independence for those who may not be able to travel as far and those without access to a private vehicle. This could be delivered in collaboration with local schools and early childhood education and care services.

Facilitating community input and advocacy during bus region contract renewals

Potential collaborators: Cumberland Council Environment and Planning Directorate, Cumberland Council Community Development Directorate, Transport for NSW, bus operators

Bus region contract renewals occur regularly and provides an opportunity to holistically review the existing bus network and explore improvements to the local network. There is an opportunity for greater Council involvement in these discussions. Council can provide a better understanding of the local community context, whilst also assisting in consultation and communicating with the local community. Council also has networks with many local organisations and service providers who provide transport and may be able to provide feedback as to areas that need better transport.

Service improvements and bus route proposals

Potential collaborators: Cumberland Council Environment and Planning Directorate, bus operators, Transport for NSW, local community organisations

Bus regional contract discussions provide an avenue to explore ways to improve service standards across the board. Frequency, operating hours and reliability must be improved to provide an efficient and convenient transport option. A standard frequency of 20-30minutes should be implemented for local bus routes and operating hours should extend later into the evening. There should also be greater consideration of bus routes that traverse bus contract regions.

With the introduction of Sydney Metro West and Parramatta Light Rail, an opportunity exists to improve service frequency and capacity for the T5 Cumberland line, which should be upgraded to meet the service standards of other suburban train routes.

A number of route changes were suggested as part of the consultation for this research. These route proposals could be discussed with the respective operator and Transport for NSW, with more detailed analyses of which proposal's local and regional context. The proposals received during consultation are outlined in Appendix 2.

Local car sharing schemes

Potential collaborators: Cumberland Council Environment and Planning Directorate, Cumberland Council Infrastructure and Works Directorate, car sharing organisations, local developers and major landholders

Car sharing schemes, such as GoGet, Hertz 24/7 and Car Next Door, can provide an option for those with a licence but without a car. Individuals register for the scheme and pay as they go. This can assist those who occasionally require a car, for example for shopping, but cannot afford the upkeep of a car. There are two main types of car sharing schemes – traditional roundtrip and peer-to-peer, both of which have limited coverage in the Cumberland area.

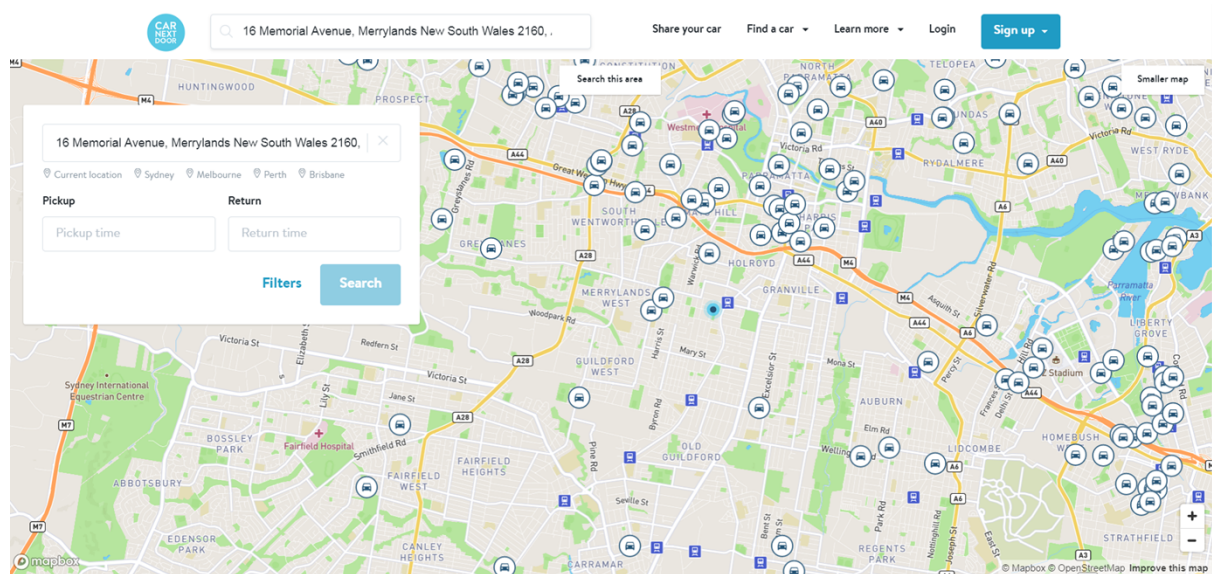


Figure 14: Vehicles available for hire on Car Next Door (peer-to-peer scheme) (Source: Find a Car, Ute or Van, Car Next Door 2020)

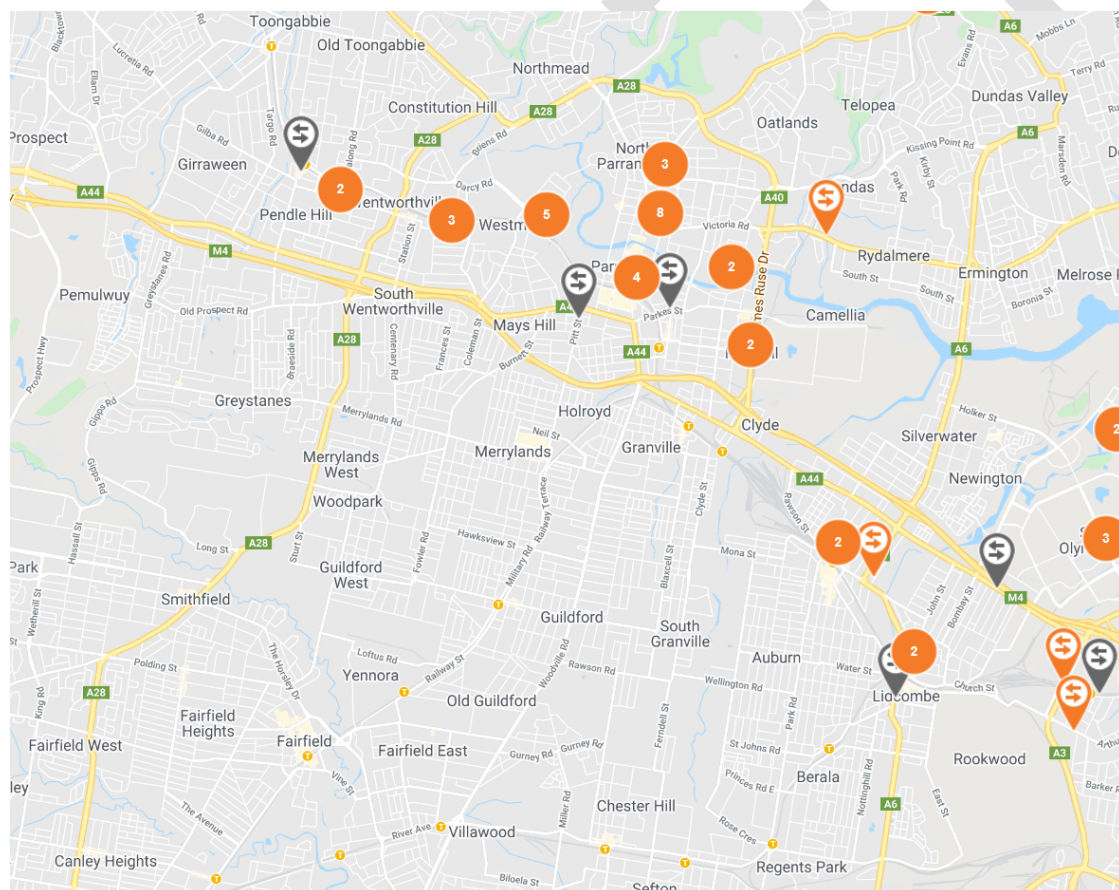


Figure 15: Vehicles available for hire on GoGet (traditional roundtrip scheme) (Source: Find Your Nearest GoGet Car Scheme, GoGet 2020)

Vehicles used in traditional roundtrip schemes are typically owned by a commercial entity, such as GoGet or Hertz 24/7, and require a car parking space allocated to the vehicle. To facilitate this type of scheme, arrangements would be made between a Council or strata management and the car sharing company to dedicate a parking space for the vehicle. In peer-to-peer schemes, individuals offer their own private vehicles for hire, usually through a third-party car sharing organisation, such as Car Next Door. The vehicle owner can

determine the cost for hiring their vehicle and receives a share of the hire fee. As a result, peer-to-peer schemes offer an additional source of revenue for owners, whilst also providing additional options for other community members.

Advocacy

A number of opportunities for advocacy have arisen as a result of this research. These are listed below.

Better data

Potential collaborators: Cumberland Council Environment and Planning Directorate, Transport for NSW, bus operators

To support local transport planning, better data is required to obtain a stronger grasp of local travel patterns. Acknowledging privacy considerations, aggregated Opal data at the local level would be of great value for Councils and community service providers alike, in addition to bus operators. Weekend travel patterns from Transport for NSW's Household Travel Survey should also be available, given it is run continuously every day of the year, and would support community event and program planning, which are often on weekends.

Reconsider metrics for access to public transport

Potential collaborators: Cumberland Council Environment and Planning Directorate, Transport for NSW, NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

As it currently stands, a site is considered to have access to public transport if it is within a 400m radius of a bus stop or 800m of a train station, as the crow flies⁴. This metric should be more nuanced to account for the ability of various cohorts. For example, a retirement village or nursing home should not be considered to be accessible by transport if it is within a 400m radius of a bus stop, given seniors are less likely to be able to walk that far comfortably. Real walking distance should also be considered as the standard metric, rather than as the crow flies. The current standard does not take into account impassable geographic barriers, such as highways, cul-de-sacs and bodies of water.

Changes to Opal Cards

Potential collaborators: Cumberland Council Community Development Directorate, Transport for NSW, Opal

Although the introduction of Opal Cards has been welcomed by bus operators, there are a number of changes that would dramatically improve user experience.

The current top up minimum values are inconsistent and appear to be arbitrary. Consideration should be made to reduce the face-to-face top up minimum to align with online methods. Similarly, there is an opportunity to explore whether a tiered fare system can also be implemented for contactless payments to account for concession holders.

The confusion associated with the School and Child/Youth Opal Cards could be reduced by combining the two card types. Technology exists to automatically adjust Opal fares according to time of day (off-peak/on-peak), and a similar system could be used for school students given the regular routine of going to and from school, should the existing system be kept. More leniency with regard to the travel route for School Opal cards would be beneficial. This would facilitate travel to co-curricular activities or a place with suitable adult supervision when parents or guardians are not at home, such as a relative or friend's house and after hours school care. Moreover, School Opals should also be valid for other school journeys, such as class excursions.

⁴ Transport for NSW 2013

Finally, the availability of bulk tickets purchasing options would greatly benefit school groups, childcare and out of school hours providers. This proposal has two major advantages. First, it reduces the logistical challenge of ensuring every student has a valid Child/Youth Opal with enough money (as School Opals are invalid for these trips). Second, it reduces delays from every student having to tap on and off. With such a system, bus operators can also be notified in advance of a large group and prepare accordingly. This bulk ticketing system would also accommodate other larger cohorts wishing to travel together.

Transport in the school curriculum

Potential collaborators: Cumberland Council Community Development Directorate, NSW Department of Education and Training, Federal Department of Education, Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority

There is an opportunity to include transport and getting around in the school curriculum to teach children about their local transport networks. This advocacy would be targeted at the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, which regularly reviews and reports on feedback about the effectiveness of the national curriculum. The NSW Department of Education and Training and Federal Department of Education are other key stakeholders.

School students who do not live close to transport hubs or high frequency services often are not familiar with public transport or getting around on their own. As these children grow up, this can lead to increased dependence on their parents for transport or require the family to purchase additional private vehicles to support the growing travel needs of the household. Incorporating local transport in the curriculum would increase the confidence and independence of students, whilst also providing access to employment and education opportunities in cases where transport may not otherwise be available. Such a study topic could include parents and guardians to explain how School Opal cards operate.

Communications

Potential collaborators: Transport for NSW, local organisations, Cumberland Council Community Development Directorate

Improvements can be made with regard to how transport changes are communicated with the general public. Changes that disproportionately affect certain cohorts, such as lift installations and people with disabilities, should be communicated directly to these cohorts or to their service providers or peak bodies. Councils can act as an intermediary in these situations due to their large networks of community organisations.

The new Waratah 2 train sets have display screens near each door that show historic photos and are not efficiently utilised. There is an opportunity for this to significantly improve user experience by providing real time information about connections and disruptions, as well as recent accessibility upgrades to stations.

NDIS and Commonwealth Home Support Program advocacy

Potential collaborators: Cumberland Council Community Development Directorate, Community Wheels Inc, local community organisations, National Disability Insurance Agency, Federal Department of Health

The NDIS and Commonwealth Home Support Program have been described as overly complex for those who need it. There is an advocacy opportunity to reduce the complexity of registration with these systems, or to provide greater support for those who need help registering. Further advocacy can be made on the NDIS front for greater allocation of transport funds for NDIS receivers to ensure that their transport funding is sufficient for the travel demands of their services and activities.

APPENDIX 1. LIST OF PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS AND GROUPS

Auburn Diversity Services Inc
Auburn Long Day Child Care Centre
Auburn West Public School
Australian Afghan Hassanian Youth Association
Brisbane City Council
Canterbury-Bankstown Council
Cardinal Gilroy Village
Comfort Delgro Australia
Community Care Forum
Community Transport Organisation
Community Wheels
Cumberland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultative Committee
Cumberland Access and Safety Committee
Cumberland Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Committee
Cumberland Youth Advisory Committee
Cumberland Youth Interagency
Fairfield City Council
Greater Community Transport
Monash University
Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association
National Disability Services
Parramatta City Council
Pemulwuy OOSH
Penrith City Council
Sherwood Grange OOSH
Sometimes Centre
Transdev
Transit Systems
Transport for NSW
University of Technology Sydney
Western Sydney Community Forum
Western Sydney Local Health District
Westir
Widemere OOSH
Youth Action
Youth Off the Streets

APPENDIX 2. ROUTES PROPOSED BY RESPONDENTS

Bus

- Pemulwuy and Greystanes - Pendle Hill and Toongabbie
- Blacktown - Greystanes (Shopping Centre) - Merrylands - Guildford - Granville South - Auburn - Regents Park – Bankstown
- Merrylands - Greystanes (Shopping Centre) - Pemulwuy - Prospect - Blacktown.
- Fairfield - Merrylands - Greystanes (Shopping Centre) - Pendle Hill - Wentworthville - Westmead (Hospital)

Train

- “Inner West Line” – Liverpool – Regents Park – Lidcombe – City
- Granville stop on T1 Western Line
- Direct access between Auburn and Regents Park
- Regular Olympic Park to City service

Other

- Light rail along Parramatta Road from City to Olympic Park via Carter Street, Lidcombe
- Light rail from Parramatta to Bankstown via Granville and South Granville

APPENDIX 3. DATA TABLES

	Total population	Children aged 0-11	Teenagers aged 12-17	Older residents aged 55+	Older residents aged 65+	Low or no English proficiency	Have need for assistance	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Auburn (North)	11,338	15.1%	4.1%	11.3%	4.9%	25.5%	4.2%	0.1%
Auburn (South)	26,010	16.8%	7.3%	17.4%	8.2%	20.4%	6.2%	0.2%
Berala	8,889	14.7%	6.6%	21.5%	10.1%	21.6%	5.1%	0.4%
Girraween - Toongabbie	7,499	21.3%	6.5%	17.9%	10.2%	8.2%	4.2%	0.7%
Granville	10,706	16.2%	5.9%	17.0%	8.2%	14.5%	5.2%	0.4%
Greystanes	22,796	17.2%	6.9%	27.7%	17.0%	4.2%	5.9%	1.0%
Guildford (East)	14,466	20.2%	7.8%	18.7%	9.3%	12.7%	7.5%	0.7%
Guildford (West) - Yennora	7,819	18.9%	6.7%	17.4%	8.0%	11.6%	5.8%	0.8%
Guildford West - Woodpark - Smithfield	6,468	20.0%	7.5%	20.3%	10.0%	6.2%	6.4%	1.2%
Lidcombe (North)	10,013	11.5%	5.2%	22.0%	9.8%	18.9%	4.6%	0.2%
Lidcombe (South) - Rookwood	9,595	12.9%	5.2%	18.5%	7.4%	19.0%	4.2%	0.2%
Merrylands (Central)	22,410	17.6%	6.5%	18.2%	9.5%	11.3%	6.1%	0.8%
Merrylands (East)	8,574	18.1%	7.9%	17.5%	8.1%	12.1%	5.9%	0.6%
Merrylands West	6,596	15.6%	7.0%	26.2%	15.4%	8.3%	8.6%	1.2%
Pemulwuy	5,012	23.2%	6.0%	12.1%	4.9%	3.7%	2.0%	0.7%
Pendle Hill	5,770	16.7%	5.5%	23.8%	14.9%	8.1%	8.1%	0.6%
Regents Park	4,361	16.3%	6.9%	22.9%	10.8%	15.7%	5.8%	0.8%
South Granville - Chester Hill	6,454	20.7%	8.8%	18.8%	9.8%	12.8%	8.2%	1.0%
South Wentworthville	6,255	18.1%	6.9%	21.6%	10.7%	7.1%	5.2%	1.1%
Wentworthville	7,369	16.8%	5.5%	18.7%	9.1%	8.6%	4.3%	0.7%
Westmead - Mays Hill	7,610	18.8%	6.1%	18.6%	9.5%	9.3%	6.7%	0.5%

	Total households	Median household income	Weekly income less than \$1,000	Households with children under 15	Households with two or more cars	Households with no cars
Auburn (North)	3,393	\$1,185	37.5%	26.3%	24.6%	19.6%
Auburn (South)	7,058	\$1,278	34.0%	30.0%	44.5%	11.3%
Berala	2,678	\$1,345	32.1%	26.3%	45.5%	12.2%
Girraween - Toongabbie	2,434	\$1,733	24.7%	38.9%	44.2%	8.1%
Granville	3,405	\$1,262	34.9%	26.0%	36.1%	15.3%
Greystanes	7,345	\$1,617	27.0%	27.5%	61.8%	4.1%
Guildford (East)	4,321	\$1,115	39.8%	28.5%	44.2%	11.9%
Guildford (West) - Yennora	2,647	\$1,121	40.1%	24.6%	40.7%	13.3%
Guildford West - Woodpark - Smithfield	1,986	\$1,371	31.5%	29.1%	55.9%	6.3%
Lidcombe (North)	3,100	\$1,521	27.4%	22.3%	40.8%	12.8%
Lidcombe (South) - Rookwood	2,890	\$1,651	26.6%	24.6%	45.5%	9.8%
Merrylands (Central)	7,304	\$1,265	34.9%	27.5%	41.1%	12.4%
Merrylands (East)	2,545	\$1,294	33.7%	28.1%	48.1%	10.7%
Merrylands West	2,260	\$1,135	39.5%	22.2%	43.5%	13.8%
Pemulwuy	1,604	\$2,372	12.5%	43.7%	63.9%	1.7%
Pendle Hill	1,905	\$1,559	29.7%	32.1%	34.5%	13.3%
Regents Park	1,405	\$1,187	36.6%	25.0%	41.6%	10.5%
South Granville - Chester Hill	1,973	\$940	46.3%	28.8%	43.7%	15.5%
South Wentworthville	2,007	\$1,475	28.7%	29.1%	52.3%	6.7%
Wentworthville	2,487	\$1,599	27.1%	33.7%	36.7%	13.4%
Westmead - Mays Hill	2,517	\$1,724	27.6%	36.8%	31.0%	15.1%

APPENDIX 4. REFERENCES

- Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016, 'Census of Population and Housing', *Australian Government*, Canberra
- Car Next Door 2020, 'Find a car, ute or van', *Car Next Door*, Melbourne, <<https://www.carnextdoor.com.au/search>>
- Coates, B & Cowgill, M 2020, 'As the COVID-19 crisis deepens, few Australians have much cash in the bank', Grattan Blog, *Grattan Institute*, Melbourne, <<https://blog.grattan.edu.au/2020/03/as-the-covid-19-crisis-deepens-few-australians-have-much-cash-in-the-bank/>>
- Currie, G, Richardson, T, Smyth, P, Vella-Brodrick, D, Hine, J, Lucas, K, Stanley, J, Morris, J, Kinnear, R & Stanley J 2009, 'Investigating links between transport disadvantage, social exclusion and well-being in Melbourne – Preliminary results', *Transport Policy*, vol. 16, pp. 97-105
- GoGet 2020, 'Find Cars', *GoGet*, Sydney, <<https://www.goget.com.au/find-cars/>>
- Hurni, A 2005, 'Transport and social exclusion in Western Sydney', *28th Australasian Transport Research Forum*, Sydney
- NSW Legislative Council 2020, 'Sydenham-Bankstown line conversion', *Parliament of NSW*, Sydney, <https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/lcdocs/inquiries/2551/Report%20No%2011_PC%206_Sydenham-Bankstown%20line%20conversion.pdf>
- Open Data Hub 2020, 'Open Data Day 2020', *NSW Government*, Sydney, <<https://opendata.transport.nsw.gov.au/open-data-day-2020>>
- Transport for NSW 2013, 'Integrated Public Transport Service Planning Guidelines', *NSW Government*, Sydney.
- Transport for NSW 2020a, 'Household Travel Survey (HTS)', *NSW Government*, Sydney, <<https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/data-and-research/passenger-travel/surveys/household-travel-survey-hts>>
- Transport for NSW 2020b, 'Planning for rail services west of Bankstown station in 2024', *NSW Government*, Sydney, <<https://yoursay.transport.nsw.gov.au/west-of-Bankstown>>



CUMBERLAND CITY COUNCIL

Cumberland City Council

16 Memorial Avenue, PO Box 42, Merrylands NSW 2160.

T 8757 9000 **W** cumberland.nsw.gov.au **E** council@cumberland.nsw.gov.au

f Cumberland City Council Sydney **@** [cumberlandcitycouncil](https://www.facebook.com/cumberlandcitycouncil)